Mandatory CPD and professional re-validation schemes and their role in motivating and re-energising information professionals: the UK and New Zealand experiences[1]

Dr Judith Broady-Preston
Department of Information Studies
Aberystwyth University
Aberystwyth, United Kingdom
Email: jbp@aber.ac.uk

Amanda Cossham
School of Information and Social Sciences
Open Polytechnic of New Zealand
Lower Hutt, New Zealand
Email: amanda.cossham@openpolytechnic.ac.nz

Meeting:	**128. Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning**

Abstract :

This paper explores issues in relation to the contribution and importance of mandatory continuing professional development (CPD) in re-energising and motivating the information profession. Set within the context of developing our understanding of the concept of 'professionalism' for the contemporary information profession, the mandatory schemes offered by professional associations in the UK and New Zealand are compared and contrasted, and an assessment made of their pros and cons in this regard.

Introduction

Evidence suggests that the information profession (IP) is undergoing a period of profound change in relation to its qualifications base… Many of the previously enshrined shibboleths of professional education, training and development are undergoing a fundamental re-examination, including that of achieving a robust definition of the concept of "professionalism" with regard to the contemporary IP(Broady-Preston, 2010, 66).

Arguably, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is one means by which both the individual, and profession as a whole, may be re-energised and motivated. Currently (May 2010) the UK professional association, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), is designing its light-touch compulsory CPD scheme, agreed by Council in 2008, and applicable to all chartered members on a rolling programme, beginning in January 2011. The New Zealand association, the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA), introduced professional registration and a compulsory CPD scheme in 2007, and now requires all registered practitioners to revalidate their registration every three years, with the first revalidations due 2010.

Presented here is a comparative evaluation of the two schemes set within the context of (1) pressures for change within the information profession and (2) contemporary developments with regard to concepts of professionalism more generally. Building on earlier work by the two authors, outlined in this paper is a comparative critique of the two schemes outlined above which will form the basis for a structured workshop discussion at the IFLA World Library & Information Congress August 2010 in Gothenburg, Sweden, focusing on the role and relevance of mandatory CPD activity in motivating and regenerating the contemporary information profession. Especial consideration is given to the contribution such schemes may make to enhancing the global image of the profession, and facilitating individual career development, progression and motivation.

Scope and background

As indicated above, this paper arose from discussions following the presentation of an earlier paper by Broady-Preston (2009a) at the IFLA World Library & Information Congress August 2009 Satellite conference held in Bologna. Earlier work on CPD by Cossham and Fields (2007) is cited in the 2009 paper, and as a result of their discussions, the authors have collaborated on an evaluation of the role and significance of CPD schemes for the information profession, based on the experiences within their respective countries.

The centrality of CPD and its significance to contemporary professional practice is given further credence as

> …there is an overall lack of understanding across the profession about who should be responsible for what aspects of CPD, what should be offered, and who should be taking the initiative (Cossham and Fields, 2007, 582)

This lack of understanding in relation to the respective roles and responsibilities of the individual, the employer, and the professional association was still discernible in the literature reviewed for the 2009 study (Broady-Preston, 2009a). The two mandatory schemes devised by the professional associations in the UK and New Zealand are arguably an attempt to take the initiative in this field and therefore the following evaluation of the merits of the two schemes is both timely and pertinent.

Changing information landscape

Much has been written recently in relation to changes within the contemporary information landscape and reviewed in recent publications by the authors (see, for example, Broady-Preston, 2009a; 2009b; 2009c; 2010). Self-evidently, any examination of professional development is only of relevance if set within the context of drivers for change within the contemporary information profession. Amongst the drivers identified in earlier work, is the blurring of boundaries in relation to qualifications, professional practice, career development and professional skills and knowledge. Arguably in relation to the latter especially, the impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) is transforming the information landscape across all sectors of practice, including archives and records management, in addition to more mainstream library and information services. As Currall and Moss queried in 2008

> The question…is to what extent ICT represents an epistemological shift or is simply an extension of existing practices in a new order. Whatever the response, the relationship of archivists, records managers, librarians and museum curators with the ICT community cannot be avoided. In a digital environment where there are no physical strong rooms, information professionals can no longer claim a monopoly of custodianship. If physical custody of objects ceases to be a core purpose, where does that lead the information professions? (69)

The impact of web 2.0 on professional practice, education, and professional development has been reviewed elsewhere (see for example, Broady-Preston, 2009b; 2010). In addition, arguments in relation to the fragmented nature of intellectual development within library and information science (LIS) have relevance in this context, with commentators suggesting that in research terms at least, this may even be viewed as a source of strength rather than as a weakness, viz:

> We question the long-term viability of a traditional strong discipline with limited interdisciplinary work and strong boundaries. From our vantage point, the evolution of ICTs and the "information Society" [sic] during the recent decades has transformed "information" into a hot currency within a wide range of different research fields. In this new and exciting playing field, LIS [library and information science] hold[s]…distinct advantages (Nolin and Astrom, 2009, 24).

An earlier attempt by Audunson (2007) to stitch together conceptually the "complex patchwork" of LIS as a discipline, a profession and a vocation, concluded

> Just as libraries are vital in constituting librarianship as a professional field, the profession-oriented perspective plays a vital integrating role in keeping the patchwork-like field of LIS together as a field of research and education (106)

Globally, drivers for change in the information landscape need to be viewed within the wider context of the economic recession. Whilst the scale of the

recession has differed from country to country, in the UK there is evidence that it is causing librarians to rethink library service provision. In the academic sector, for example, a 2010 joint report from the Research Information Network and the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) concluded:

> Libraries are increasingly being asked to play an important role in the development of more effective arrangements for managing, curating, sharing and preserving data created or gathered by researchers. Such a role requires libraries[sic] to develop new skills and services, and their ability to do that is increasingly constrained in the current financial climate (*Challenges…*2010, 14).

There is substantial evidence that envisioning the future scope and direction of library services and the profession beyond merely contemporary drivers for change is on the professional agenda currently. The three national libraries of the UK are devising or have produced their visions of the future direction of national library services in particular, but also reviewing trends of more general relevance to the profession as a whole. The British Library is currently developing its vision for services in 2020, the National Library of Wales produced a draft report of its 2020 strategy in March 2010 (*Twenty-twenty…*2010) , and the National Library of Scotland looks further ahead, envisioning services in 2030 (Hunter and Brown, 2010). Finally in this context, an over-arching vision for the "academic library and information services of the future" was commissioned in January 2010 by a project partnership consisting of the British Library, Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), the Research Information Network, Research Libraries UK , together with SCONUL, and is an 18-month project being undertaken by Curtis+Cartwright Consulting Ltd (*A vision…*2010)

In New Zealand the National Library's New Generation Strategy to 2017 is the roadmap that sets out how the National Library will achieve its statutory purpose of "enriching the cultural and economic life of New Zealand and its interchanges with other nations" in the 21st century [National Library Act 2003]. The aim is to re-think and re-focus service delivery as well as modernise and streamline an aging infrastructure (including upgrading the existing building and facilities) and continue developing collaborations and partnerships across the Libraries of New Zealand, the research, GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) and education sectors. (National Library of New Zealand, 2007).

The amalgamation of the National Library and Archives New Zealand with the Department of Internal Affairs was announced in March 2010, the Minister noting that the three organisations

> share natural synergies. These organisations have a common focus on using digital technology and making government information widely accessible to citizens through the internet. … The independence and integrity of the Chief Archivist, National Librarian and Chief Librarian will be preserved. (Minister of Internal Affairs, 2010)

Professionalism – under threat?

Concepts of professional knowledge and identity are clearly factors of significance in relation to CPD schemes. Again, any exploration of professionalism with regard to the information profession specifically, must be seen within the broader context of a more general scrutiny of the status and significance of "professions" and "professional work" within society as a whole. In the UK, a Panel on Fair Access to the Professions was established by the Government and reported in 2009, with its final Report acknowledging the growing importance of professional work in the economy

> one in three jobs today [2009] is professional and millions more professionals may be needed by 2020 as our economy becomes ever more service-oriented and professionalized (HM Government, The Cabinet Office, The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions, 2009, 9)

Methodologies for analysing the changing nature of professions and determining professional identity from the perspective of the individual and the organisation are explored in a general context in Hotho's paper (2008) and in relation to the information profession in Broady-Preston (2009c). Payne (2008) and Feather (2009) explored the role and attributes of the information professions, with similar themes being examined in several papers presented at the *People in the Information Profession* CAVAL conference in Melbourne (see for example, Broady-Preston, 2010; Maesaroh and Genoni, 2009)

In 2010, CILIP began what it describes as a "conversation with the Knowledge & Information community" (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), 2010b). Originally entitled "*The Big Conversation*" and now known as "*Defining our Professional Future*", this conversation will take place

> between April and June 2010…with anyone interested in the knowledge and information domain…designed to begin a process of surfacing the issues, and the thoughts and ideas of all stakeholders (ibid).

This exercise seeks information from stakeholders in the UK information professional community in relation to three broad topics, namely the scope and remit of the information domain in 2020; the role and remit of professional bodies in this domain; and finally, how individuals will engage with professional associations (ibid). The outcome of the exercise will be presented at the CILIP AGM in October 2010, and will be used to inform any future review or restructuring of the Institute.

CPD and Revalidation: the schemes in context

All of the above reflects a professional landscape categorised by fundamental change and development. Professional identity is a key driver of CPD, and it is within the context of such a rapidly-evolving scenario that this examination of current CPD schemes occurs. Whilst CILIP and LIANZA are the only two library and information professional associations known to have introduced

mandatory CPD currently (May 2010), nonetheless, globally there is discernible interest in professional development and training (see for example, Maesaroh and Genoni (2009). However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to review all such developments in depth.

The requirement to maintain and develop professional knowledge beyond initial qualification is considered by commentators to be a key attribute of professionalism (see, for example Abbott, 1995; McDonald, 1999; Hotho, 2008). The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) states categorically that

> as a professional you have a responsibility to keep your skills and knowledge up to date…at least once a year we recommend you review your learning over the previous 12 months, and set your development objectives for the coming year (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), 2010a)

The sequence of events leading to what was described by the CILIP CEO as a "ground-breaking decision" was traced in detail in an earlier publication (Broady-Preston, 2009a). Currently, CILIP operates a voluntary revalidation scheme for Chartered members, eligibility for which is three years full time employment (or equivalent) following registration, valid until implementation of the new mandatory scheme, projected for January 2011. In February 2010 a final report from the CPD Scheme Task and Finish Group (TFG) as submitted to the Governing Council, who agreed the establishment of a successor body, charged with the task of developing the submission, assessment, and examination requirements, together with policies and procedures, ready for testing by January 2011, with phased implementation from January 2011, with full coverage of all registered practitioners by the end of 2013 (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) (2010c)[2]

In summary, the features of the projected scheme are

  ➢ Light touch – it should require little extra work beyond the CPD most would choose to do

  ➢ No core curriculum or minimum time requirements

  ➢ Simplicity; the scheme will be web-enabled to minimize time, effort and inconvenience and should be able to be mapped closely onto employers' appraisal schemes

  ➢ No requirement for the compilation of a portfolio

Somewhat confusingly, CILIP refers to its voluntary scheme as "revalidation" whilst the new mandatory scheme is designated "CPD".

LIANZA designates its scheme as professional registration, accompanied by continuing professional development that leads to revalidation of that registration. A professional registration scheme was first introduced as part of

its professional framework in 2004 against a backdrop of concerns with regard to the existing arrangements, summarised as

> ➢ lack of formal oversight of professional library and information qualifications

> ➢ absence of a register of library and information professionals

> ➢ lack of accreditation or registration, thereby creating difficulties for New Zealand graduates wishing to work in other countries

> ➢ no recognised framework for continuing professional development for library and information professionals. (LIANZA Taskforce on Professional Registration, 2005, 3)

A taskforce was established, consisting of representatives from the different sectors of the profession and there was widespread consultation of the membership to finalise the details of the scheme. Significant aspects of the new scheme are the introduction of a body of knowledge, specified qualifications for registration, a mentoring scheme, compulsory continuing professional development (CPD) as a pre-requisite for revalidation of registration, and the recognition or 'approval' of library education providers. The scheme was introduced mid 2007 and applies to LIANZA and six other closely related professional information associations[3] A two-year transition period began during which registration was open to most members, including those who might not be eligible under the mature scheme due to a lack of suitable qualifications, with the scheme being fully operable from mid 2009.

Revalidation of the registration is every three years for all members, and consequently the first revalidations are expected in July 2010. The purpose of revalidation is

> to show that an individual is maintaining and applying the core knowledge, skills, attributes and ethics of a library and information professional, through application in four different aspects or domains of professional practice (LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa), 2010)

However, in contrast to the CILIP scheme as envisaged currently, the LIANZA revalidation of registration is both more prescriptive and arguably more time-consuming. The revalidation requires completion of at least 10 activities per year, covering all of the 11 areas of competency, in addition to activity in three of the four domains (currency, professional practice, communication and leadership), together with a commentary on the learning outcomes of each activity undertaken (Dobbie, 2009). Obviously it is too early to make any definitive comments at this juncture. However, whilst improving the quality of information professionals is of vital importance, it is moot as to whether the extent of this CPD activity may prove to be too much too soon.

Professional knowledge: a body of knowledge?

> "Market dominance" is achieved by a professional group…through control over expert knowledge via a delineation of a body of professional knowledge (Broady-Preston, 2009c)

As outlined in earlier work, establishing and maintaining a unique body of professional knowledge has long been held to be a core function of a professional body (see Broady-Preston, 2010). Both LIANZA and CILIP maintain a body of professional knowledge (BPK). In the case of LIANZA, their body of knowledge is based on that of IFLA, but expanded to include Mātauranga Māori (traditional Maori concepts of knowledge and knowing, including those related to the creation of knowledge) and the Treaty of Waitangi, the 'indigenous knowledge paradigms' of New Zealand. (LIANZA Professional Registration Board, 2008/2007, 2). It outlines 11 areas of competency defined broadly in three or four points which are comprehensible and comprehensive, definitive, but not prescriptive. However, a later appendix provides

> more comprehensive and specific examples of areas to be covered in each of the competency areas. Its purpose…to act as a guideline for education providers, and international bodies or peer reviewers accrediting courses or assessing course coverage. (LIANZA Professional Registration Board, 2008/2007, 2).

This makes the body of knowledge incredibly detailed, and unfortunately has been used as a prescriptive tool for measuring curricula, rather than as a guideline. In practice it is unlikely to be attained by any individual librarian unless they had a long and extremely varied career. It is certainly not possible for a qualification (whether three years undergraduate or one year postgraduate) to cover every aspect.

The breadth of the body of knowledge is of further significance here, as it is linked directly to the requirements for both initial professional training and continuing professional development.

CILIP similarly delineates a BPK (2004) which outlines a core schema of knowledge, originally designed to be adaptable, flexible and therefore not time-dependent or constrained. It

> does not indicate the level of knowledge or skill that should be achieved by individual practitioners seeking recognition and/or qualifications; these are indicated in the different documents that, together, make up CILIP's Qualifications Framework. It is not a curriculum; within any programme of academic, vocational or work-based study it will be possible and indeed desirable for students to pursue a wider range of subjects leading to an enhanced personal profile of understanding and skills (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), 2004, 1).

The CILIP and LIANZA experiences of using such schema in practice are remarkably similar. In the case of CILIP, there have been difficulties for individuals and institutions in attempting to use the BPK in its original form as

a guide for personal development and course design. An interpretation of the BPK was published in 2008, designed primarily to assist course developers (Lovecy and Broady-Preston, 2008). However, the latter document notwithstanding, given the range of reported difficulties, CILIP Council approved a timetable for revision and amendment to the BPK which is ongoing currently (May 2010) ((Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), 2010c). In New Zealand, the first LIANZA revalidations are due in July 2010, and this will be an opportunity to see how well the BPK works for the individuals seeking revalidation.

Such experiences would appear to pose a degree of difficulty in relation to mandatory CPD activity. At the very least, it begs the question as to whether such activity is meaningful if the body of knowledge on which it resides is open to differing interpretations. The need for BPKs such as these to be readily understood and accessible by individuals and organisations is given added weight by developments in the UK with regard to the development of professional skills frameworks and generic competency frameworks by a range of organisations (see Broady-Preston, 2010). Moreover

> a crucial factor in achieving a clear understanding of these issues lies in determining the distinction between the related concepts of skills, knowledge and competency, in understanding and appreciating the distinction between "can do" lists and conceptual understanding, and between education and training (op. cit., 71)

Recording progress: portfolios, reflective writing and practice

Both the CILIP and LIANZA schemes require members to record their skills development and knowledge acquisition in relation to their respective BPKs. LIANZA states that

> Professionally Registered members must show that they have participated in learning within all 11 areas of the Body of Knowledge to gain revalidation. (LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa), 2010a)

Their three-year period of revalidation requires the individual to demonstrate their learning activities in three of the four domains of professional practice, recorded in a journal. Emphasis is placed on linking these activities to induction and training provided in the member's workplace. The member must also provide an evaluation of the learning outcomes they have achieved, together with an indication of their planned CPD for the next three years to the Registration Board. Moreover

> Individuals should relate their learning activities to the personal qualities of the library and information professional where appropriate, and to the code of professional conduct where appropriate. (LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa), 2010b)

Finally, the scheme requires individuals to submit a signed statement that the information contained in the journal is "true and accurate" verified either by

the applicant's employer (or another registered professional familiar with the applicant's work and practice)(ibid)

Thus the LIANZA scheme may be categorised as one based on formal learning principles, with third party verification of skills and knowledge acquired. In contrast, the CILIP approach in relation to both schemes, voluntary and mandatory, acknowledges that responsibility for CPD lies firmly with the individual, whilst simultaneously recognising that an effective partnership is essential between the individual and the employer in order for the needs of both parties to be met (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) (2005), 5; Broady-Preston, 2009a).

Moreover, the LIANZA journal is a simple excel spreadsheet rather than an e-portfolio. It is probable that this is due to a lack of knowledge about e-portfolios beyond the academic environment when the scheme was being developed in 2006, rather than a conscious decision to not use them. CILIP's voluntary scheme is portfolio based, albeit via hard copy rather than e-enabled. Watson, one of the original architects of the CILIP professional qualifications framework, is an enthusiastic exponent of the portfolio approach, defining it as "an evaluative review of professional development" (2008, 4), contending that it

allows individuals to present information that they have selected to meet the criteria…The emphasis is clearly focused on the individual and their learning; output rather than input…The focus is on you and how you have developed professionally and personally to meet the challenges of a demanding and ever-changing information environment. [It] covers past achievement, present experience and proposed development (op. cit., 4-5).

However, the use of e-portfolios to record personal learning and development is gaining momentum. The Australian ePortfolio Project, for example, based at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), and led by Gillian Hallam, has released its Stage 2 final report, including a toolkit for e-portfolio development (Australian ePortfolio Project, 2010). Similarly, increasing numbers of PDP (Personal Development Plans) schemes offered by universities in the UK are migrating to an e-platform (See for example, Aberystwyth University, 2010a). From 2005/6 all UK higher education institutions are required by Government to offer "a means by which students are able to build, monitor and reflect on their personal development" (Aberystwyth University, 2010b). As the CILIP mandatory scheme is projected to be implemented initially with recently qualified candidates there is clearly a wish to build upon this student experience. Details of the CILIP scheme have yet to be finalised, but it is anticipated that it will be e-enabled via the CILIP website. However, issues of security, privacy and data protection are all matters of practical detail which, if not addressed adequately and appropriately, may result in the scheme failing.

Regardless of the lightness or otherwise of touch, CPD requires the maintenance of a record of progress of some description, outlining the acquisition of knowledge and development of skills. Whether or not schemes

require individuals to build a formal portfolio to demonstrate their achievements, self-evidently some record of progress must be kept and made available for scrutiny by assessors.

Clearly the ability to reflect on learning is integral to CPD however recorded. LIANZA requires

> comment on the learning outcomes of each activity undertaken … [and] a brief self-assessment of their continuing professional development over the period, including any explanation for why the criteria above might not have been met, (LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa), 2010b).

Reflective learning has obvious links to and is grounded in Evidence Based Library and Information Practice, which requires the ability to critically appraise information and insights from multiple sources (Booth, 2006). CIPD contend that

> Reflecting on your learning enables you to link your professional development to practical outcomes and widens the definition of what counts as useful activity. Quite simply, you need to keep asking 'what did I get out of this?' (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (2010b))

Moreover, reflective writing skills are required by individuals in order to demonstrate reflective learning when compiling their record of achievement, portfolio based or otherwise. Reflective writing, and indeed learning, encourages individuals to take a step back from day to day operations, and reflect on their activities and professional practice, thereby acting as a bridge between theory and practice. Sen categorises reflection as

> a process that can be developed and maintained to support continuous learning and personal and professional development…This process can include the process of reflective writing as a means of capturing the thought and experiences in journals, diaries, blogs, etc. (2010, 81).

Arguably by requiring reflective learning and writing, the CPD schemes may also indirectly provide new professionals with the support and skills required to write and publish more widely, bridging the "dissemination gap" and career barriers identified by Bradley (2008).

Support: mentors and the mentoring process

The existence of adequate mentoring arrangements will obviously be a critical success factor for both schemes. Currently both professional bodies offer mentoring schemes and peer support for candidates. LIANZA has a mentoring scheme - 'supervised initial professional training' - to assist recent graduates during the first 12 months after completing their qualification LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa) (2010b). CILIP has a mentoring scheme, and the CILIP Special Interest Group, PTEG (Personnel Training and Education Group) offers a series of

training courses at regular intervals and maintains the *Mentor Support Network* (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), 2010a)

However, the population size and geographical spread in New Zealand poses some difficulties in maintaining an effective mentoring scheme. The information profession is small, with c.6000 individuals, including both qualified and unqualified. Finding a mentor in a particular location with particular understanding of the graduate's chosen type of library, and meeting the LIANZA requirements of being registered and more than five years in the profession, is not easy. Whilst the UK has a much larger population in both general terms and in relation to the population, nonetheless, equally there are difficulties in supplying mentors evenly across the sectors and in certain constituent countries. In Wales, for example, there are difficulties, in finding mentors of sufficient relevant professional experience, and who are also fluent in both the official languages of Wales.

Where are we now? Reactions and current developments

In the UK, reactions to the planned introduction of mandatory CPD were not universally positive, following the paper presented at Bologna in 2009, viz:

> The concept of gradually introducing a light-touch mandatory CPD scheme to some categories of CILIP membership has not been without it's controversies as a topic, that's understood (Hood, 2009).

As a result, CILIP ran a CPD scheme survey on the members' area of the website with a closing date of 8 January 2010 and supported by the Chair of the CPD Scheme Task and Finish Group

> As CILIP members, we are setting the standard both in our sector and also nationally and demonstrating our commitment to professionalism and the communities and markets we serve, through the CILIP CPD scheme. It's a scheme that is evolving by a combination of leadership from CILIP Council and shaping by all of us as members. We are now moving into the detailed design stage of the scheme's development. I welcome your views and guidance on what difference the scheme's changes will make to you (Wilson quoted in Hood, 2009)

The detailed developments alluded to above are ongoing in May 2010. In addition, in February and March 2010, CILIP Council agreed to continue examining reciprocity of qualifications between CILIP and LIANZA (Hood, 2010).

In New Zealand, the first full cycle of registration and revalidation is not yet complete. There has been a positive uptake of registration, with around 1800 registered librarians as at May 2010 (including members of all seven professional associations participating in the scheme). LIANZA membership has risen sharply from 1222 in 2007 to 1869 in 2010; a 53% increase attributable directly to the existence of the professional registration scheme and its transition provisions[4].

It is not yet possible to come to any conclusions as to whether the LIANZA scheme is operating as intended, as it is less than a year since the end of the transition scheme and the beginning of the mature scheme. With the first revalidations due in July 2010, there is considerable interest in how the process of revalidation will be managed and the outcome for individuals if they have not met the requirements as specified. The complexity of the process, coupled with the level of detail in the BPK itself may result in considerable effort being expended in reviewing the revalidation journals. Other factors which may have an impact on the success or otherwise of the LIANZA scheme include the extent to which

> sufficient mentors can be found

> the overall requirements are perceived as too onerous for individuals

> there are sufficient CPD educational and training opportunities available country-wide addressing all aspects of the body of knowledge to enable each individual to satisfy the revalidation requirements.

Finally, one of the 'selling points' of the scheme initially was that of reciprocal recognition of New Zealand qualifications by overseas professional associations. This is in progress with regard to the UK and New Zealand, but as indicated above, has not been confirmed officially.[5]

Conclusions

The two CPD schemes in New Zealand and the UK may be viewed as an attempt to reinforce concepts of professional identity in the context of rapid change, together with the questioning of the role and value of professions in general, and the information profession in particular. Arguably the speed of change, especially with regard to ICT developments means that logically, professional knowledge and skills must be subject to continual updating and evolution if the profession is to remain categorised as such, as opposed to being perceived as a skilled or technical occupation. CPD is one element in making the case for the information profession as a profession.

Issues in relation to education and societal development are also of demonstrable relevance in this context but beyond the scope of this paper to review in detail. This practical review of the components of mandatory CPD schemes is one contribution to an ongoing debate, rather than a complete answer to the issues highlighted above. However, by requiring information professionals in both countries to reflect on their learning, maintain and update their skills and knowledge base, schemes such as these may contribute to individual self-esteem and motivation. Undoubtedly the emphasis on continuing professional development will have a positive impact on the profession, both in terms of the individual levels of skills and knowledge attained, and in terms of the wider understanding of the importance of professionalism gained by members of the profession, employers and the general public.

The extent to which the schemes succeed in their intent will depend to a large extent on practical details surrounding their implementation. Clearly member and employer buy-in is crucial to the success of the schemes, as is recognition by the wider, global information profession. In New Zealand, this scheme represents the first such instance of librarians being registered or accredited in any way, and it can be seen as a benchmark for professionalism. Additionally, in the case of LIANZA, it is an attempt to revitalise levels of professional membership, previously viewed as optional and without demonstrable benefit, and define a body of knowledge possessed by a professional librarian. Whether the complexity of the scheme, BPK and revalidation processes stand up over time and meet the needs of the profession remains to be seen. In the UK the challenge for CILIP is to render their scheme sufficiently light-touch to obtain member support, without it being so superficial as to be perceived as meaningless or irrelevant by employers and society at large.

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[1]   The views outlined in this paper are those of the authors and do not reflect those of any organisation with which they are associated.

[2]   NB Minutes of CILIP Council meetings are available on the members-only area of the CILIP website.

[3]   These are as follows:
    (School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) , Te Rōpū Whakahau (Maori library and information workers network), New Zealand Law Librarians Association (NZLLA), Special Libraries Association (SLA), International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML(NZ)), Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association (ANZTLA)

[4]   Personal email from Anna O'Keeffe, LIANZA membership secretary, 23 February 2010 to Amanda Cossham

[5]   As of 21 May 2010.